

# What Happened to Jews Sent to the *Aktion* Reinhardt Camps?

[John Wear](#)

Establishment historians state that all Jews sent to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps of Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor were exterminated. It is claimed that a handful of strong young Jews were temporarily spared to keep the camps running. All other Jews sent to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were immediately gassed upon arrival without registration.[\[1\]](#)

Historian Peter Longerich, for example, states in his book *Holocaust* that 1,274,166 Jews had been killed in the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps by the end of 1942. Longerich bases his statement on the Höfle telegram from January 1943 which shows that this many Jews had been sent by then to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps. Longerich asserts without evidence that all Jews sent to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were murdered.[\[2\]](#) This article documents that contrary to what establishment historians state, the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were actually transit camps rather than extermination camps.

## Demographics

The German policy of resettling Jews in the areas of Europe east of Germany is supported by the demographic studies of Eugene M. Kulischer. Kulischer, who was a member of the International Labor Office in Montreal during World War II, published in 1943 the book *The Displacement of Population in Europe*.[\[3\]](#)

This book used the work of 24 institutions that had at their disposal a huge network of channels of information in the various European nations. Kulischer was thus able to base his demographic studies upon the best existing sources.

Kulischer devoted an entire section of his book to the expulsion and deportation of Jews during World War II. Kulischer stated:

*For the Polish ghettos are not the last stage in the forced eastward migration of the Jewish people. On 20 November 1941, the Governor General, Hans Frank, broadcast the information that the Polish Jews would ultimately be transferred further east. Since the summer of 1942 the ghettos and labour camps in the German-occupied Eastern Territories have become the destination of deportees both from Poland and from western and central Europe; in particular, a new large-scale transfer from the Warsaw ghetto has been reported. Many of the deportees have been sent to the labour camps on the Russian front; others to work in the marshes of Pinsk, or to the ghettos of the Baltic countries, Bielorussia and Ukraine.*[\[4\]](#)

Kulischer wrote that removal of the Jews to the east was largely motivated by the wish to make use of them as forced labor. Jews were not (initially) sent to work in the Reich because this would violate Hitler's policy of making Germany free of Jews.

Kulischer stated that "deportation to the east is for Jews the equivalent of the recruitment for work in the Reich to which the rest of the population of German-controlled Europe is subject, and their removal further and further eastward is doubtless connected with the need for supplying the army's requirements near the front."[\[5\]](#) Kulischer concluded that the vast majority of deported Jews "went to

the General Government, and further east to the German and Rumanian-occupied territories of the Soviet Union.”[\[6\]](#)

Nowhere in his book does Kulischer speak of extermination camps or of a German policy of genocide of the Jews. The demographic evidence does not support such a conclusion.

### **Himmler’s Statements**

Heinrich Himmler issued orders and made statements indicating that the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were transit camps. For example, on July 5, 1943, Himmler personally gave the following order:

*The transit camp Sobibor is to be converted into a concentration camp. In the concentration camp a plant for the repair of captured munitions is to be established.*[\[7\]](#)

On September 18, 1941, in a letter to Gauleiter Arthur Greiser, Himmler wrote that, in accordance with the wishes of the Führer, the Jews were supposed to have been transported out of the *Altreich* and the Protectorate “into the eastern territories newly incorporated into the Reich two years ago,” but merely “as a first stage,” in expectation of a deportation “still farther to the east.”[\[8\]](#)

On November 18, 1943, in a speech given in Krakow before SS leaders and other German officials, Himmler spoke of “...these 16 million foreign peoples, whose numbers were once made even larger by an enormous number of Jews, who of course now have emigrated or been brought to the east.”[\[9\]](#)

Some Jewish historians dismiss these and other statements by Himmler by saying that the Nazis used code words to hide their genocide of European Jewry. This theory does not explain why Himmler used explicit written orders for his other crimes. For example, Heinrich Himmler authorized in writing many illegal human medical experiments and executions in the German concentration camps. It is absurd to think that Himmler hid the genocide of European Jewry behind code words, while his other crimes were clearly stated in writing.

### **Jews Sent from *Aktion* Reinhardt Camps to Auschwitz and Majdanek**

Since the Allies claimed that Nazi Germany had a program of genocide against European Jewry, numerous documents contradicting the genocide myth were hidden or destroyed by the Allies. However, enough documents exist to disprove Longerich’s assertion that all Jews sent to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were exterminated.

Some Jews were sent from the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps to Auschwitz and Majdanek. Polish historian Zofia Leszczynska reports that 1,700 Jews left Belzec for Majdanek in October of 1942. Jewish historians Adam Rutkowski and Tatiana Berenstein state in an article about Jews at Majdanek: “Some of the transports from Warsaw reached Lublin by way of Treblinka, where the selection of the deportees took place.” Samuel Zylbersztain wrote that on April 30, 1942, a transport with 305 Jews arrived at Majdanek from Treblinka. Such reports give the lie to the claim that Belzec and Treblinka were pure extermination camps.[\[10\]](#)

The statements of numerous Dutch-Jewish deportees also indicate that Sobibor was a transit camp. Cato Polak was deported on March 10, 1943 and remained in Sobibor one or two hours before being transferred to Majdanek. Bertha Jansen-Ensel and Judith Eliazar, who had arrived in Sobibor on March 10, 1943, were likewise transferred to Majdanek. Although they alluded to gas chambers and

cremations, they declared: "Sobibor was no camp, rather a transit camp." Jules Schelvis, who was deported to Sobibor on June 1, 1943, was transferred three hours after his arrival there and eventually returned to Holland via Auschwitz.[\[11\]](#)

Sientje and Jetje Veterman were sent to Sobibor on April 6, 1943. They were sorted out together with 28 other women for work, transferred to Trawniki, and later returned to the Netherlands by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau. Elias Alex Cohen was deported to Sobibor on March 17, 1943. Cohen spent only a few hours in Sobibor and was sent on to Majdanek with 35 other Jews. She eventually returned home to Holland via Auschwitz-Birkenau. Sophie Verduin was deported to Sobibor on March 10, 1943, and transferred to Majdanek a few hours later. Her return home to Holland took place by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau.[\[12\]](#)

Nearly all of the Dutch Jews who had been transferred from Sobibor to another camp returned home by way of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The survival of these Dutch Jews proves that Sobibor was not used solely as an extermination camp.[\[13\]](#)

### **Forensic Evidence**

Forensic evidence indicates that the *Aktion Reinhardt* camps were not extermination camps. A detailed forensic examination at the Treblinka Camp using sophisticated electronic ground radar found no evidence of mass graves. The Australian team that carried out this forensic examination at the Treblinka Camp was headed by Richard Krege, a qualified electronics engineer. Krege's team used an \$80,000 Ground Penetration Radar (GPR) device, which sends out vertical signals whose returns are visible on a computer monitor. GPR devices are routinely used around the world by geologists, archaeologists and police. GPR detects any major disturbances in the soil to a normal effective depth of four to five meters depending on conditions.

For six days in October 1999 the team carefully examined the entire Treblinka site, especially the alleged "mass graves" portion, and carried out control examinations of the surrounding area. Krege's team also carried out visual soil inspections, and used an auger to take numerous soil samples. They found no soil disturbance consistent with the burial of hundreds of thousands of bodies, nor even evidence that the ground had ever been disturbed. In addition, the team found no evidence of individual graves, bone remains, human ashes or wood ashes. Richard Krege concludes from his examination of the site that Treblinka was never an extermination camp.[\[14\]](#)

With regard to excavations at Sobibor, Thomas Kues states:

*In an article published in The Scotsman on November 26, 2001, we read that Polish archaeologist A. Kola and his team had discovered seven mass graves at the Sobibor site...Despite seven years having passed since the drills and diggings were reportedly made, not a single article, paper or scientific report has appeared on them, neither in English, Polish, nor in any other language.*[\[15\]](#)

No articles, papers or scientific reports have been published because A. Kola and his team had nothing to report that would benefit the claim that Sobibor was an extermination camp.

Defenders of the Holocaust story have sometimes used forensic archaeologist Dr. Caroline Sturdy Colls and her limited excavation work at Treblinka to prove that Treblinka was an extermination camp. An analysis of her work shows that she fails to prove that Treblinka was an extermination camp.[\[16\]](#)

## Photographic and Engineering Evidence

German aerial reconnaissance photographs taken in 1944 of the Treblinka Camp also cast serious doubts on the widely accepted story that Treblinka was a mass extermination center. Discovered in 1989 in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., these photographs corroborate other evidence indicating that Treblinka was actually a transit camp. The photographs indicate that Treblinka was an extremely small camp. The camp's alleged burial area is too small to contain the hundreds of thousands of bodies supposedly buried there. Treblinka was also not particularly well guarded or isolated. The aerial photographs show that fields where Polish farmers planted and cultivated crops were directly adjacent to the camp perimeter and were cultivated right up to the edge of the camp. [\[17\]](#)

John C. Ball, a geologist with experience interpreting aerial photographs, has reviewed the wartime aerial photos taken of Treblinka, Belzec and Sobibor. Ball concludes:

*To this day there is no air photo evidence to support the alleged mass murder of the Jews at any location in Europe occupied by the Germans during World War Two. Further, air photo analysis refutes the claim that the 'Nazis' had intended, at whatever time, to keep events in the alleged extermination camps secret.* [\[18\]](#)

Of the five camps where carbon monoxide was supposedly used to kill inmates, the vast majority of victims are said to have been killed in the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps. Carbon monoxide was supposedly generated by Diesel engines to kill the victims. However, the Diesel engine is an inherently poor choice as a source of carbon monoxide. The logical choice as a source of carbon monoxide would have been the gasoline engine. Any common, ordinary gasoline engine would easily have given the Germans 10 times more carbon-monoxide production than any similarly sized Diesel engine. [\[19\]](#)

American engineer Friedrich Paul Berg wrote:

*The hoax becomes even more obvious when one discovers that far better sources of carbon monoxide, better even than gasoline engines, were readily available to the Germans – and required neither Diesel fuel nor gasoline...Even if some deranged minds had tried for a time to commit murder with Diesel exhaust, after a few, many-hours-lasting attempts it would have become apparent to even the most-demented fiend that something far better was needed. The idea that the National Socialists actually used such a method not just for a few fiendish experiments, but continually over many months in several different locations is too preposterous. It never happened!* [\[20\]](#)

Walter Lüftl, a court-recognized expert engineer who headed a large engineering firm in Vienna, concludes in his report that the stories of gas chambers with Diesel engines and gas vans at places such as Treblinka can only be disinformation. Lüftl states:

*The laws of nature apply both to Nazis and anti-fascists. Nobody can be killed with diesel exhaust gas in the manner described [in the Holocaust literature].* [\[21\]](#)

## Impossibility of Disposing of Bodies

Historians universally acknowledge that none of the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps had crematoria. By contrast, German concentration camps such as Buchenwald, Bergen-Belsen and Dachau had crematoria even though mass killings are not alleged to have taken place at these camps. Why wouldn't the

Germans have also built crematoria at the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps, since such crematoria would have been far more-necessary to dispose of the bodies of the victims of the mass killings?[22]

According to Holocaust historians, the bodies of Jews gassed at the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were first buried in mass graves. The bodies were later exhumed and burned in the open air.[23]

Based on several cremation experiments, Carlo Mattogno determines that 160 kg of wood are needed to cremate a human body weighing 45 kg. He calculates that the burning of 870,000 bodies at Treblinka would have left 1,950 tons of human ashes, plus 11,100 tons of wood ashes. The total volume of ashes would have amounted to approximately 48,400 cubic meters. Also, 139,200 metric tons of wood would have been required for the incineration of the bodies. Since human teeth and bones cannot be completely destroyed through open air cremations, myriads of teeth and bone fragments would have accumulated at the site of the former camp.[24]

Even if Mattogno's calculations are significantly inflated, the mass extermination of approximately 870,000 people at Treblinka would have left huge amounts of human and wood ashes as well as teeth and bones. The fact that large quantities of these have not been found indicates that mass exterminations of inmates did not take place at Treblinka.

Although enormous amounts of fuel would have been needed to cremate the hundreds of thousands of alleged corpses, there is no credible documentary record or witness recollection of the great quantities of firewood that would have been required. According to Polish-Jewish historian Rachel Auerbach, fuel to burn bodies was not needed at Treblinka because the bodies of women, which had more fat, "were used to kindle, or, more accurately put, to build the fires among the piles of corpses..." Even more incredible, she wrote that "blood, too, was found to be first-class combustion material." [25] Auerbach's explanation of how bodies were burned at Treblinka does not withstand intelligent consideration.

## Conclusion

Many Jewish prisoners undoubtedly perished during or after their rail journey to the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps. It is also plausible that hundreds and perhaps thousands of Jews who were too weak or ill to continue the eastbound journey from the camps were killed by officials acting on their own authority. These prisoners were buried at the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps. However, there is no evidence that the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were mass extermination centers in which anyone was systematically put to death.[26]

The *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were transit camps rather than extermination camps. The demographic studies, the statements from Heinrich Himmler, the reports of transfers of Jews from the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps to Auschwitz and Majdanek, the lack of credible forensic evidence that mass exterminations occurred at these camps, the photographic and engineering evidence, the impossibility of disposing of so many bodies in such a short period of time, the relative lack of secrecy and security in the camps, and the small size of the areas where the bodies were supposedly buried all refute that the *Aktion* Reinhardt camps were death camps.

## Endnotes

---

- [1] Graf, Jürgen, "David Irving and the Aktion Reinhardt Camps," *Inconvenient History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2009.
- [2] Longerich, Peter, *Holocaust: The Nazi Persecution and Murder of the Jews*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, p. 340.
- [3] Kulischer, Eugene M., *The Displacement of Population in Europe*, Montreal: International Labour Office, 1943.
- [4] *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.
- [5] *Ibid.*, p. 110.
- [6] *Ibid.*, p. 112.
- [7] Mattogno, Carlo and Graf, Jürgen, *Treblinka: Transit Camp or Extermination Camp?* Washington, D.C.: The Barnes Review, 2010, pp. 258-259.
- [8] *Ibid.*, p. 254.
- [9] *Ibid.*, pp. 255-256.
- [10] Graf, Jürgen, "David Irving and the Aktion Reinhardt Camps," *Inconvenient History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2009.
- [11] Mattogno, Carlo and Graf, Jürgen, *Treblinka: Transit Camp or Extermination Camp?* Washington, D.C.: The Barnes Review, 2010, p. 259.
- [12] *Ibid.*, pp. 259-260.
- [13] *Ibid.*, p. 260.
- [14] *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 19, No. 3, May/June 2000, p. 20.
- [15] Graf, Jürgen, "David Irving and the Aktion Reinhardt Camps," *Inconvenient History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2009.
- [16] See <http://www.westernspring.co.uk/treblinka-forensic-examination-fails/>.
- [17] Weber, Mark and Allen, Andrew, "Treblinka," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 12, No. 2, Summer 1992, p. 134.
- [18] Ball, John Clive, "Air Photo Evidence," in Gauss, Ernst (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust: The Growing Critique of Truth and Memory*, Capshaw, Ala.: Theses & Dissertations Press, 2000, p. 284.

- [19] Berg, Friedrich Paul, "The Diesel Gas Chambers: Ideal for Torture—Absurd for Murder," in Rudolf, Germar (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust: The Growing Critique of Truth and Memory*, Uckfield, UK.: Castle Hill Publishers, 2019, p. 463.
- [20] *Ibid.*, pp. 463, 473.
- [21] Lüftl, Walter, "The Lüftl Report," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4, Winter 1992-1993, pp. 403-406, 419.
- [22] Graf, Jürgen, "David Irving and the Aktion Reinhardt Camps," *Inconvenient History*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2009.
- [23] *Ibid.*
- [24] Mattogno, Carlo and Graf, Jürgen, *Treblinka: Transit Camp or Extermination Camp?* Washington, D.C.: The Barnes Review, 2010, pp. 150-151.
- [25] Auerbach, Rachel, "In the Fields of Treblinka," edited by Donat, Alexander, *The Death Camp Treblinka*, New York: Holocaust Library, 1979, p. 38.
- [26] Weber, Mark and Allen, Andrew, "Treblinka," *The Journal of Historical Review*, Vol. 12, No.2, Summer 1992, p. 143.

<b>Author(s)</b> :	<a href="#">John Wear</a>
<b>Title:</b>	What Happened to Jews Sent to the <i>Aktion</i> Reinhardt Camps?
<b>Sources:</b>	
<b>Dates:</b>	published: 2020-05-20, first posted: 2020-05-21 02:30:56

<http://inconvenienthistory.com/12/2/7291>